

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 042919 TOSEC 040210

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO HONG KONG TOKYO TAIPEI
SINGAPORE MOSCOW CINCPAC FOR POLAD FROM PEKING DTD 23 FEB 1976

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 304

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJECT: PRC VISIT OF FORMER PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON

1. VISIT TO PRC BY FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON TO THE PRC HAS PROCEEDED
ALONG EXPECTED LINES. MR. AND MRS. NIXON AND THE REST OF THEIR PARTY
WERE MET AT THE AIRPORT THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 21 BY ACTING PREMIER
HUA KUO-FENG, AN NPC STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBER YAO LIEN-WEI, THE PRC
MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND HEALTH, OTHER OFFICIALS AND 350
REPRESENTATIVES FROM PEKING. ON FEBRUARY 22, THE NIXONS MET CHOU EN-
LAI'S WIDOW TENG YING-CHIAO IN THE MORNING, MR. NIXON HAD A
SUBSTANTIVE MEETING WITH ACTING PREMIER HUA AND HIS ADVISERS IN THE
AFTERNOON, AND THE WELCOME BANQUET WAS HELD THAT EVENING. THE NIXONS
HAD AN AUDIENCE WITH CHAIRMAN MAO FOR ONE AND ONE-HALF HOURS AT NOON
FEBRUARY 23.

2. THE EVENTS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY HANDLED TO DEMONSTRATE A WARM
WELCOME FOR THE FORMER PRESIDENT, BUT THE PROTOCOL HAS BEEN KEPT A
NOTCH BELOW THAT GIVEN TO PRESIDENT FORD LAST DECEMBER IN ORDER TO
AVOID OFFENDING THE USG. THE NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL GREETERS IS FEWER
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AND ALTHOUGH NCNA REPORTED MORE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MASSES, THE

AIRPORT ARRIVAL WAS LOW KEY AND DID NOT INCLUDE FORMAL CEREMONIES. EVEN THE LENGTH OF THE MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN MAO WAS HALFWAY BETWEEN THE HOUR MR. NIXON HAD IN 1972 AND THE TWO HOUR SESSION BETWEEN THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT FORD IN DECEMBER. NCNA AGAIN DESCRIBED THE CONVERSATION AS "FRIENDLY" AND "ON A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS", BUT ADDED THE STATEMENT THAT THE CHAIRMAN "ASKED MR. NIXON TO CONVEY HIS REGARDS TO PRESIDENT GERALD R. FORD UPON RETURNING HOME."

3. PARTICIPATION BY USLO IN THE VISIT HAS BEEN CONSONANT WITH CHINESE HANDLING OF VISIT. ACTING CHIEF, ALONG WITH ECONOMIC COUNSELOR AND WIFE, MET NIXONS AT AIRPORT ON ARRIVAL. ACTING CHIEF AND THREE COUNSELORS WITH THEIR WIVES ATTENDED WELCOMING BANQUET AND WILL GO TO CULTURAL PERFORMANCE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 23. USLO REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT AT HEAD TABLE DURING BANQUET (MR. AND MRS. NIXON WERE THE ONLY AMERICANS AT THE HEAD TABLE) AND HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED IN SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATIONS.

4. IN HIS FEBRUARY 22 BANQUET SPEECH ACTING PREMIER HUA
1) PRAISED THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S "FARSIGHTEDNESS" IN ESTABLISHING CONTACTS BETWEEN THE PRC AND THE UNITED STATES; 2) ESSENTIALLY REAFFIRMED FOREIGN POLICY POINTS MADE IN PRC TOASTS DURING PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT AND 3) SUGGESTED THAT (CONTRARY TO MUCH OTHER PRC MEDIA COMMENT) THE PRC'S INTERNAL "REVOLUTIONARY MASS DEBATE" WILL BE LIMITED TO THE EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SPHERES.
THAYER UNQTE INGERSOLL

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